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Table 15: (APPENDIX III)

Functional Calendar of Seasons and Human Activities among the Highland-Plateau Amhara

Month: Abyssinian Calendar (Julian) in Amharic	Month: Equivalent in Western (Gregorian) Calendar	Climatic Seasons on Abyssinian High-Plateau	Annual Cycle of Amhara Ecological Activities (Economics, Agriculture, etc.)	Annual Cycle of Religious Seasons and Activities among Coptic-Abyssinian Amhara.	Cycle of Amhara Social Events	Syncretism	New, Ethiopian Civic Events on National Calendar
Mäskäräm 1	Sept. 11	receding flood after rainy season; yellow "mäsqäl" daisy carpets land; spring ("tsädaya").	place beehive basket-work in trees (swarming season); pasture is in flower; plowing new or fallow field for later cultivation, while soil is still fairly soft ("gäl").	17th Mäskäräm: Feast of the (true) Cross ("yäMäsqäl Mäl")- public rejoicing around bonfire (dämmära). Minor: 1st Mäskäräm is St. John's Day. 11th: "Arafa" - (Reunion of Adam and Eve)	Kin visiting when paths passable; children bring New Year flower bouquets ("soquṭaṭash") on and after 1st (St. John's Day); and receive promise of new clothes for Mäsqäl.		"Mäsqäl" is now also a national holiday: Emperor appears at bonfire (Sept. 27th).
to	to						
Mäskäräm 30	Oct. 10						
Teqemt 1	Oct. 11	sunny growing & ripening season (ämmänä sega).	Remove honey from hive. Harvest first barley ("gebs"), thresh and winnow it for roasting or beer-making ("tällä"); sell honey to make mead ("täj"); children guard harvest against birds and baboons.	12th Teqemt: St. Michael's Feast "Mikael"; services followed by picnics in countryside. Local: 5th: pilgrimage to "tobel" holy wells and waterfalls of Zäbrä Mänfäs Qeddus (Abe).	outdoor games of children: boys make bullroarers ("gur-amesesh") to frighten birds away, shoot pebbles at baboons from slingshots. Girls dance rounds and greet storks arriving "from Jerusalem".		Annual commemoration of Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie, Nov 2nd. (Teqemt 23rd).
to	to						
Teqemt 30	Nov. 9						

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825 lope, reddish, more shy.

Ethiopian klipspringer - "sässo", a little mountain antelope resembling the European chamois, with soft, smooth skin. The Amhara is amused by the curious habit of this sociable animal of mixing with herds of tame goats and grazing in their midst, when goats are taken to upper hillsides for pasturage in the rainy season.

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Waterbuck - "defassa", large antelope resembling European red deer in build. Brown color; hers of 5 to 10 usually contain only one old bull. Common near Lake Tana.

Reedbuck - "behor", golden-colored antelope, in bush near water. They like to inhabit a specific small territory, in herds of 5 to 10.

Ethiopian ibex - "walya", very wild, red-speckled, on the dega steep mountains of Semyen subprovince. Not common elsewhere.

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223 Francolins - "qoq" is the generic name for this family of common wild fowl of the woyna dega; resemble the partridge. Boys are adept at hunting them with slingshot and pebble and run after them until both are exhausted.

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Guinea fowl - "zegra" or "jegra", black, lean, fast runner, found near water.

Partridge - "sərän", common on woyna dega. Wild

243 as a cereal grain in Abyssinia since ancient times. It is known in the USA as "teff lovegrass" and is sometimes grown for hay or pasture. In Abyssinia it is the most important cereal.

Tyëff seeding takes place, by broadcasting, at the beginning of the rainy season in June; it is ready for harvest in October-November. Sheep are driven over after the seeding to cover the seeds and thus insure maximum germination. Harvesting is done by hand cutting. The grain is made into sheaves about 6 inches thick. Sickles [412] made by the Falasha ironsmiths are simple affairs, a quarter-circle of toothed iron blade fitted into a wooden handle. Tyëff flour is made by the housewives, who grind it on a stone mill (wofcho) by hand on the mano-matate principle.

There are tow major kinds of sorghums (durra) grown as staple cereals, "mashella" and "zengada"; a third, "dagussa" is used more for making beer and in poor times. Many of these are sown when the early light rains come in March-April. The stalks of mashella are used to build simple temporary huts; other stalks become fodder. As [857] soon as the heavy rains are over, boys with slingshots and whips are stationed in the fields and on lookout posts atop the "umbrella tree" to fight off the birds who are very fond of sorghum, especially the "mashella".

Mashella (Andropogon sorghum) is of yellowish-white color, and the most desired of this family. The seed is much bigger than tyëff. It is often ground and mixed with it for injära-baking. Known in other parts of Africa as

285 Other fiberwork and basketry include: a large bas-
415 ket of withes, "qarchat", used to measure 25 kilos of pin-head-grained teff; a table made of split bamboo ("qerqaha"), or of a variety of reeds ("sabaz", "geramta", "akarma"); baskets to carry dry food)"akofada") made by shepherding boys and girls; baskets to carry soggy stew, covered by morocco-type tanned leather by the faqi specialists, with straps holding the lid tight ("agalgel"); little grain baskets ("qulbit"); and the even smaller dowry basket ("muday") in which the bride carries her personal spinning equipment and little materials for adornment and ornament, often itself ornamented with dyed reeds; plaited straw baskets, very tightly woved and used as milking pots("qwacha")

285 There is also a purely ornamental fiber plate, en-
[531] tirely flat, with interwoven ornamentally dyed reeds, mostly in ring patterns and star designs. These are hung on the inner wall of the tuqul, probably in imitation of the interior decoration of the feudal "great man" 's house.

285 Young boys learn to make a slingshot ("wanchaf")
411 of a strong fiber ("nacha"). When completed, it has a
●857 loop on one end to hook over a finger. A pebble is placed in the protruding and flat center; then the slingshot is swung several times around the head and the loose end
[244] released at just the right speed and direction. It can stun a baboon and thus chase the band threatening the crops, or frighten off birds.

439 Some imported tools and utensils, have reached the
412 Amhara, but remained trade good. One was the straight razor, "arab melach", bought from Arabs as the name indicated,

796 selling plowpoints for the plowing that will soon begin when the light rains have softened the ground.

[263] On this Thursday, the pious begin a 3-day fast, taking only dry peas and water after the noon hour. Good Friday, called "seqlät", is on the 15th of Miyazya. Chil-
796 857 dren, too young to fast, are given special privileges of impertinence that day. (For are not all rules suspended now that the Savior himself is dying?). From sunrise on, boys and girls knock at doors of huts and houses, chanting:

[539] "Musha-musho, (nonsense rhyme, meaning lamentation, funeral chant)
we come for your crucifixion (Oh Christ);
Fill (our hands) with flour (ye women),
we are many as fleas".
Musho-musha,
May He (God) give ye fat cattle,
children in your womb;
give us gifts!"

They are given freshly-baked bread being prepared for the Easter feast, but they keep on demanding, making the most of this rare freedom, insulting and mocking the stingy hosts. They may carry an effigy corpse of the latter, as if to his funeral, weeping and lamenting his "lekso" (funeral eulogy). Some boys dress as priests, the girls imitating hysterical women relatives, until they bury him with full ceremonials on the market place, to the great amusement of the adult audience.

796 Adults on this Friday rise early for morning wor-

796 the youngest are lifted to see the parade. Boys and
● [857] girls age 7 to 15 go from hut to hut starting in the early morning, chanting "Buhe, Buhe", "hoyya, hoyyo, ho", and verses:

[539] "All shout 'Buhe!, children all!
Give us what (you have) prepared; Do not change (your mind)! "

"When the rooster has crowed, night is gone;
After Buhe, the winter(rainy season) is gone".

796 Long whips, mostly of finely braided fibre, of
526 tree bark or "tucha" grass, are made before Buhe, and
[41] young men practice with them until they can hit even small targets easily. On Buhe afternoon, two groups of contestants face each other, often across a swollen brook, and line up so that each individual faces an opponent of equal skill and strength. They come armed with the whips, and begin to warm up by hurling insults at each other, addressing each other in the female gender. Soon the game of aiming at the face and ducking the adversary's whip begins. The whip has a short wooden handle, but the strap may be as long as 15 feet. Sometimes this opportunity is taken to work out grudge fights. For, traditionally, any wounds incurred, even the loss of an eye, cannot be taken to court or cause a feud, as the result of this ritual battle. No other weapons may be used. The losers flee, are pursued to their huts, and the victors are entitled to all the

796 526 food of the feast prepared by the losing side.

In the evening "fires of joy" are lit, where the rain-drenched, weary and sore contestants and others can dry out, drink barley beer, and are supposed to forget and forgive the hostilities. Some may still boast of individual feats of heroism, in Amhara warrior style; others will sulk. But generally the day ends in harmony, after the excitement which itself was a welcome break in the monotonous hibernation of the rainy season.

796 The end of the annual cycle coincides with the end of the rainy season. The last 5 days (in leap years 6 days) are added after the end of the last month, and are called "Pagumēn" or "Qwagmē". On the 3rd day the [776] annual festival of St. Raphael, called "geddus Rufaēl", [821] the water saint, takes place. The rain, which still falls heavily that day, is considered "ṭebel" (holy water) and to have the power to dull the poison of snakes so [787] that their bites will not be fatal. Much rain during Pagumēn is taken as an omen that the crops will be good.

796 874 This day is final examination day for the boys who have attended church school long enough to be promoted to "deacon". They are examined in correct chanting of liturgy and prayers. To be mentally wide awake they often go to the dabbara beforehand, and, for a small gift, obtain the stimulating herb "esa fars" (lit. Persian wood) or drink boiled "astänagär" (lit. the plant that makes to talk), which also helps to overcome stage-fright.

796 857 539 The younger children go from hut to hut, chanting:

"In the name of Rufael,

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796 857 [539] from the bin of peas
fill me up."

Thereupon the householder gives them a handful of shembera peas, which they roast to "qolo", and this symbol, too, is considered to invite a good crop.

796 805 The 5th or last day of Pagumēn is the annual feast day of St. John. The "tabot" from his church is carried to water very early in the morning, and the men bathe in the river. The old year is symbolically buried, in some regions, by ceremonial burial of the book "Lefafa Tsedeq" (Scroll of Righteousness) which resembles in part the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead. The day is traditionally [651] also the end of the fiscal budget year, on which the nagadras, the appointee over commerce, had to pay the feudal tribute to his lord (at least a large jar of beer and 20 enjara breads) in addition to squaring his accounts.

That evening torches are lit, for this is the beginning of a new year.

c) The Religious Life Cycle of the Lay Individual.

852 Baptism usually occurs after 40 days for boys, still later for girl babies, sometimes as long as 80 days. This practice is based on Old Testament patterns, and more directly, on the period of 40 days that the Virgin Mary herself had to segregate herself from the Temple after the birth of Jesus. (The Falasha Jews of Abyssinia is concerned less that a baby might die

854 is a special occasion when father lets the infant ride on his shoulders ("ashkokke alä", lit. rode like a marmoset monkey) while going to visit another hamlet. Men do not carry children on their [165] backs, women's fashion. But parents, particularly fathers, do not take infants too seriously for an additional reason, that of infant mortality which is still high at this stage.

857 Socialization and enculturation begin through the peer-group of playmates, with whom infants have the most frequent, lengthy, and intensive contacts. They tease each other and scold each other into what they, in their playful, experimenting fashion, regard as "proper" behavior; and penalize, haze and discipline each other in the same way. From the adults they take both ideas and hand-me-down objects that have been used, worn-out and discarded, for their play activities, organize them experimentally into child-culture version of their own; for adults rarely produce a toy for children nor give them any new, unused object.

854 There is a cooperative side to this apparently random play
857 activity, leading to the beginning of useful economic activities.
861 Older children teach the younger ones, e.g., to make little whisk-brooms ("wof ger", lit. bird's foot) out of reeds, for which they are rewarded by their mothers with a thick, cake-like bread(similar to "dabye" of monks), which carries the same name, "wof ger". On certain church holidays, particularly "Buhe", younger children accompany older ones on their gift-begging tours.

857 Their powers of observation, active, free and relatively un-
867 structured prior to later discipline, imitate, in their play activities, the social relations, including the family and sexual-social relationships of their elders. When about five years old,

857 boys and girls - for the sexes are not yet separated up to that
867 time - play "house" with considerable sophistication. For example, when they play "marriage", the "father" of the "bride" goes to the "elders" to inquire about the character of the "groom", after the groom's father has initiated the negotiations on the groom's request. They build a "marriage hut", and play at heavy drinking of barley-beer and honey-mead. The "bride" demands a gift from her new "husband", and enters into his "residence". After they have been in there a while, the two best-men, the "mizē", who had been duly sworn to protect her even against her husband, go off to the bride's parents to announce loudly and joyfully that the girl had proven a virgin! Whereupon the "mizē" are feted.

B. The Stage of Childhood, "Reason" Incipient Discipline.

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855 There is no special rite of passage that marks entry into the next stage, at about 5 for girls, about 7 for boys. But there is recognition, at this point, that the girls mature faster and are economically useful at a younger age than boys. Henceforth, girls
[291] play with girls, follow their mothers in their duties, (watch babies, fetch wood) and wear a more complete shift that covers them better; while boys play in boys' groups, follow their fathers, have regular duties assigned them such as taking cattle to and from pasture, and guarding the harvest against birds and baboons. Girl-children are addressed and referred to as "lɔja-gäräd" (servant maid) for their duties are even more regular than those of
[858] the boys. Both sexes can now be asked in court to choose sides when their parents are being divorced and the guardianship is in question. For they have entered the "age of reason".

855 Neglect of duty is therefore punished, and a father may fly into a sudden rage, beat the child without waiting for an excuse, even hurl a firebrand at the offending boy, so that considerable injuries sometimes occur. Mothers discipline the girls in similar temperamental fashion. But the rage, in either case, is quickly forgotten. There is no pattern of cold discipline, no "woodshed" punishment, rather hot-tempered, quick retribution.

857 Play activity and imitation of adults continues, but it takes on more seasonal and constructive characteristics. This is partly due to the seasonal pattern of the economic activities of boys age 7 to 11 and girls 5 to 14. Formal education in church school rarely begins before 11 in the rural areas, whereupon their play activities become more "extra-curricular".

[526] The seasonal games include the ball game after the harvest is completed, known as "gencheb" or "kwas", and seasonal construction and repair activities. On the church feast of Mikael, little boys have their own outdoor party, eating barley roasted on the stalk, and watching the flirtatious play of adolescent boys and girls.

291 Boys 7 to 11 still wear the tattered, knee length cotton shift, as their basic garment in rural areas, but beg a new one from relatives once a year, for the holy day of "Mäsqäl", or "Timqät". But they are increasingly self-conscious about nudity, and if the tattered shift reveals the pubic area, other boys will haze and playfully beat the offender, saying:

[539] "My father told me not to let a snake warm itself in the sun".

865 867 In summary, parental discipline in this age group is specific, work-oriented and intermittent; while experimentation with, and

867
[309] lock in addition. But boys never wear the ring of hair, which would be insulting to them.

864 When sex differentiation becomes more emphasized in the culture, at about seven, sex talk and sex play goes on primarily within the peer group of the same sex. The invitation to do this is "enkä sälantiya", (lit. let us play at guessing impolite matters). They play hide and seek, whisper, re-enact what they have observed their parents do at night in the hut, and phantasy experimenting with sexual possibilities. Children observe a lot in the quiet of the night in the hut, but are careful not to be seen watching. They misunderstand and are greatly puzzled, since no elder will explain "impolite matters" to them. It is impolite even to mention the names of genitals and reproductive organs, such as "kola" for penis, and "ems" for vulva, so they are merely whispered about. In church school, boys are puzzled by overt references to "Mary's womb" and "God's seed", but questions are rejected as "rudeness". Youngsters in town have broader information, because there they hear "rude" talk more often among adults.

D. Toys and Games.

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524 The economic activities of children in the fields, where they spend much time in guarding but do little intensive labor, is regarded by them more in the nature of play. It is fun to throw rocks at thieving baboons and shoot pebbles at birds, with slingshots made of "nacha" fiber.

The boys also make a bullrearer, "mät", to scare birds away from seeds and mature crops. This instrument is also called, onomatopoetically, "guremremosh" (from "tägwerämärrämä", to

857 524 grumble, growl, snarl). It consists of a stick of wood, a foot long, 1/2 inch thick, notched at the thinner end, to which a cord of twisted fibre is attached. This is swung horizontally, above the head, to produce what is regarded as a terrifying sound. It is even used in shepherding, since boys believe it frightens away hyenas and the occasional leopard. During the rainy season, boys play it indoors to amuse each other and haze-tease younger siblings, who are frightened by it.

At the beginning of the light rainy season, when the storks and other birds fly north, children especially girls, form circles and dance rounds, chanting to the flocks of birds:

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"Stork, our country is well;
the woman who baked gitta (luxurious wheat bread)
has died swallowing gitta (i.e. luxury is plentiful).

825 At harvest time, in November, similar greetings are sung to the birds when they return from the north, from "Jerusalem" in popular belief. The Falashas children express this by singing to departing storks:

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"How are you?
The people of Jerusalem (Falashas) are well)."

The Coptic Amhara hold the same belief as to the destination of the birds.

Winter games, i.e. in the rainy season, when children are restricted to the hamlet, include building of makeshift huts, in which they play "man and wife". The girls gather leaves, roll red mud inside, and "bake" cakes. Boys mimic the farmer, weave a hood of reeds, and just as he walks in the rain broadcasting his seeds, so boys broadcast pebbles.

Swimming is a favorite sport of children in the rainy season,

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

857 when even brooks are swollen, but rivers soon become too dangerous.
524 During the first season, when they learn to swim, a rope is tied
868 around the child's waist and held by an adolescent or young adult. At this time boys make waterpistols, "tiqoosh" with a bamboo syringe; also peashooters shooting small pebbles with a bamboo strip acting as spring. Boys also make panpipe flutes from stout reeds, in preparation for "spring".

E. Formal Education and Extra-curricular Activities.

872 Basic education, already described in connection with the church, now falls into two types: the traditional church school; and the modern-style elementary school. Overlaps are beginning to appear.

Until a generation ago, the traditional church school had a complete monopoly on education, and for the vast majority of all children this is still true at this writing. It resembles in structure and function the "kuttab" school of the Muslims. Boys of peasant parents usually do not enroll before the age of 11, for until then their economic services are utilized fully, and only when they approach adolescence are the needs for their education felt by parents.

874 Most of the boys attend church school for only three years, for if they wish to study beyond what the village priest can teach them they must leave home for another district or province, e.g. a monastery school. Since the peasant family usually cannot or does not wish to sponsor this, the boy who insists becomes a "wandering" student, begging his way. Usually he goes for "zema"

000 prevail.

871 Most elementary school graduates from the provincial capitals
465 do not continue to Addis Ababa for a high school education, for they can obtain good and honorable positions, paying ETH$125.- (US $50.-) per month in the same town, as teachers, municipal clerks, with a good chance to be appointed to judgeship soon if they cultivate the right persons in power with "daj temut". Even Students who "flunk out" in the 7th or 8th grade can earn ETH$100.- as teachers of lower grades, or as low-grade clerks.

872 One old tradition which has broken down in the modern elemen-
212 tary schools but not in most church schools, is the prohibition of
178 extra-curricular writing. In the higher church grades, in which students' piety was already confirmed, especially in the monastery schools, copying psalms, gospels, (and by extension, government documents), was permitted, practiced, even regarded as praiseworthy. But there was, and in rural areas still is, fear that less pious students would use their knowledge of writing to experiment with magical formulae, doodlings, etc., creating dangerous mischief.

Therefore, parchment goatskins and writing equipment were carefully kept away from students of village church schools, and they were not taught to write. Thus, achievement of the skill of a scribe, "dabtära", required considerable individual initiative and study away from home.

212 However, boys at the "experimental" age of childhood, would
●857 amuse themselves with the forbidden game of writing and doodling in secret, and they still do. Their work can be seen scribbled even on the outside walls and posts of some churches, a daring prank, sometimes in imitation of the church painter. More often

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

212 857 boys playing in the bush write on broad leaves; or on the sun-bleached shoulder blades of dead oxen or donkeys cleaned up by hyenas, vultures and ants; or even scratch letters on their own dark skins with a thorn, preferably on the underside of the arm where it can be hidden more effectively. Sometimes rocks, charcoal and iron scrap provided tools or background for writing experiments.

Boys are very proud of this achievement, and tease illiterates, particularly shepherds who have not attended school, by writing or [524] speaking phrases of Geez. Sometimes schoolboys use riddles, which they have memorized in school to memorize arithmetic, such as:

"(Question) What is two?
(Reply) Udder of female donkey;
(Question) What is four?
(Reply) Udder of cow."

[98] In reply to this teasing, illiterate shepherd boys make up "secret languages" of their own, by interlacing letters between syllables and speaking rapidly (much as zar doctors in the zar cult).

3. The Age of Obedience: Adolescence.

882 The age of experimentation, in which liberties taken by youngsters are often condoned, comes to an end as soon as puberty is reached. Parental authority, particularly that of the father, is more frequent and intense over the activities of the adolescent than over the peer-group child. The sexes are more sharply divided, no longer engage in experimental play activities in groups, and the patterns of flirting become more culturally structured, less random, and more personal. The adolescents are made to feel more "rule" conscious. With the awkwardness of adolescence comes a sudden shyness,

854 until weaning, at the
853 age of two, the child is never removed from contact with the body of the mother or other female relative caring for him. After
857 weaning, childhood is an age of roaming over the countryside during the long dry season and of performing such useful tasks as protecting the harvest by shooting pebbles from slingshots at birds and baboons.

855 The pattern of punishment is dominated by spontaneity, during childhood as well as adolescence. A suddently enraged parent (father or male elder) may hurl a firebrand at a child, or cuff him roughly about the head and shoulders for as long as the rage lasts. Sometimes real injury results, but there is no planned, coldly calculated punishment, and the anger is usually quickly forgotten. The youngster is never left in doubt when he has transgressed. Retribution comes within a split second. Parents do not hesitate to exercise their authority and to impose their wills, when angered. The youngster soon has a clear conception of what kind of behavior it would be wise to avoid. Thus the youngster is presented, gradually, with a set of values which early become rooted in his personality, and help him to remain, later in life, in tune with his social group and culture pattern.

554 Individuals who chafe at the status quo, notably women and/or
562 individuals of either sex who have a talent and urge for individual enterprise, often find their way into the "zar" cult. Cultural participation of the female is so restricted during her life cycle, that many emotional outlets are denied her. Monotonous daily routines of manual labor; two years of breastfeeding after every birth; denial of active participation in the church; derogatory views of female intelligence on the part of the males; etc., limit the Amhara women

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

643 571 right to a direct audience at any time. The Emperor is known to glow with pleasure when a subject with whom he is speaking reveals that he comes from Manz. The Manzēs, for their part, proudly refer to their area as *ya-negus agar* ("king's country"). They are perhaps the most devoted of all Ethiopians to the present Crown. However, many stories are told to show that this loyalty has not dissolved their intractable spirit. For example, when asked to select a representative for Ethiopia's first elected parliament in 1957, some of them were indignant: "We already have *our* representative in the capital, and if he isn't able to do the job himself, let him step down and hand it to somebody else."

871 658 Despite their expressed loyalty to Haile Selassie, the Manzēs stubbornly oppose the program with which he is publicly most associated and whose portfolio he has retained, as Minister of Education, from 1943 to the present day. The adults of Manz object to having their children attend the government schools. In many cases where a child has elected to attend school on his own, his parents have cut off all support. The four schools in Manz thus have [162] an enrolment far below capacity, totaling (as of 1960) less than four hundred in this area of perhaps fifty to sixty thousand families.[49] Those hardy youngsters who do attend school often do so in rags and with an empty stomach.

• [857] One reason for this determined opposition to the government schools is the obvious economic one: children must stay at home to tend the herds. This is a problem all over rural Ethiopia, but still the schools in many other areas are overcrowded. Another reason is that, as we have seen, Manz was not interested in education in the old days. Few Manzēs learned to read in the church schools. When a boy showed unusual talent and interest in traditional studies he had to travel to Gondar, which often meant running away from Manz.

871 658 186 829 The crux of Manzē defiance of the new educational system, however, is cultural fundamentalism. The Manzēs keep their children away from the government schools because they fear that the students there are learning something that threatens the old ways. In particular, they do not like their children to learn the language of the *faranj* ("European") or to be exposed to Ethiopians who have been taught by *faranj* and thereby infected by alien ideas. Tending the farm, keeping the fasts, defending land and self—that is the sum and substance of Manzē education, beyond which there is nothing a boy needs to learn.

829 648 186 Undoubtedly part of this dread of *faranj* learning is based on the Manzēs' one experience with the white man: the Fascist occupation. As one of the strongholds of patriotic resistance to the occupation, Manz and the Manzēs became the object of the invader's unyielding fury. Over miles and miles of Manz not a home or church was spared. The inhabitants were either killed, or fled to safer areas in Galla country, or joined the underground opposition—

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

When he has eaten and washed his hands, the children take their breakfast quickly. One or two of them then lead the remaining animals out to pasture—the cows, which have already been brought back and milked; the sheep and goats; the young draft animals. They spend the day roaming the hills with their flocks in the company of shepherds from nearby farms, unless it is harvest time when each must stay close to his family's fields where the herds feed on stalks and chaff.

The peasant leaves with his older sons or manservants for the fields. (If it is a fasting day, they go directly to work without any breakfast.) The day's activity may consist of cutting the ripe crops with a fine-toothed sickle, or threshing the harvest under the hooves of cattle and mules, or winnowing grain by tossing it up in the breeze. More often than not it will consist of plowing, virtually a year-round occupation. For each crop a field must be plowed at least twice: first to loosen the crusted soil, and then to cover up the seed that has been sown. Planting occurs in several months, the schedule varying according to region. In some regions, for example, barley, wheat, and chick-peas are sown in September and October; corn, beans, and peas in May and June; and *tĕff* in July. In many areas a January planting is also common. The central position of plowing in the world of the Amhara peasant is shown by the fact that the word for his vocation, *ĭrshā*, literally means "plowing."

On plowing days, the wooden plow with its single iron share and the yoke are carried to the field, and the oxen are driven along with sticks and shouts. If it is sowing time, bags of seed are loaded on donkeys which join the procession. On his way to work the peasant is likely to see a neighbor at a distance and cries of "How did you spend the night?" are exchanged. At the field the team of oxen is yoked and the work begins. It lasts for about five hours, and the peasant is indeed wretched who does not have a helper with whom to take turns steering the heavy plow and cracking the whip as the oxen trace furrow after furrow.

The peasant's wife is too busy in the morning to sit down for a regular breakfast, so she takes bites of food at will as she works about the house. There is much ado in the house as she and her daughters, and perhaps maidservants, carry out a variety of chores—baking *ĭnjarā*, preparing *ţallā*, spinning cotton, collecting dung for fuel, sweeping rubbish off the floor, carrying water from the spring, weaving straw baskets or mats. The impression of business is heightened by the chickens, which hop in and out of the house as they please, though they must be shooed away from grain drying in the sun.

Toward noon a fresh batch of pepper sauce is prepared. If the peasant is working in a distant field, his wife carries lunch out to him—or else risks being beaten with a stick. If he is not too far away he comes home for lunch, which he eats together with his wife. They talk about what each has done in

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the morning and what remains to be done. The peasant may retire for a nap, and perhaps to lie with his wife, before taking up the afternoon's work. He returns for about three more hours of plowing after his noon rest. The afternoon sun burns down on him; the plow is harder to wield; he plods on. At home the women continue their work, no sooner finishing one task than they attend to another. The mother puts the child who rides on her back to the breast whenever it cries.

The shepherds do not come home for lunch. They have taken some *ǐnjarā* or *dābo* ("whole wheat bread") along with them. In harvest months they enjoy a special treat, roasting grains or pulse which they have snatched from somebody's field. Though their responsibility is great—a boy will be whipped if an animal in his charge gets hurt or lost or if it gets into fields of grain—their work is light. They spend the day running idly, practicing war chants, playing at various adult activities. Their mood is as free as the great spaces about them. As the day grows hotter they are likely to discard their sheepskin covering and move about naked. Toward dusk, the shepherds' spirits quicken. Their songs become more excited; lively melodies are heard from their wooden flutes. It is time to go home to family, supper, and fire.

When father and sons enter after the day's work, they start munching on roasted grains, *ǐnjarā*, or *dābo*. They may drink some *ṭallā* and relax. It begins to get chilly. The room is dark and smoky, the fleas bite them—but it is the easiest time of the day. The family is together, and everyone enjoys talking and hearing about the homely events of the day. A few hours after dark, supper is served. Parents and older children eat together out of a common basket. Younger children and servants stand respectfully, awaiting their turn, grateful if someone places a large bite of food in their mouths.

After dinner there is a great washing of feet—the father's by his wife or children, the others' by themselves. The peasant recites or reads his evening prayers and lies down on his bed made of strips of cowhide. The children settle for the night on the clay benches. Last of all, the mother covers the embers with ashes, sets out the grain she must grind before dawn, and places her weary body next to that of her husband's.

This grueling schedule is not repeated every day. On nearly half the days in each month heavy labor is not permitted—men may not plow or harvest, women may not grind or spin. These are holy days: Saturdays and Sundays (both of which are honored as the Sabbath in Abyssinia) and the monthly and annual commemorations of the saints.

The woman's schedule on such days is only lightened, not radically altered. Food and drink must still be prepared and served. Except for a possible trip to church with her husband Sunday morning before breakfast, a woman's hours are still confined to the home compound and its obligations. The shepherds must still take care of their herds, though some boys may get together for

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Egyptian mosques; youth dormitories and community houses in certain tribes in India; the academic and athletic youth organizations of ancient Athens and Sparta; not to mention the numerous teen-age associations of modern Western society.[3]

Here again, the adolescent Amhara is not involved in any such social forms. The advent of puberty is associated with the growing up and out of childhood groups, the gangs of shepherds who spend their days together in work and play. The girl of eleven or twelve is expected to spend all her time at home, under careful supervision. The boy of thirteen or fourteen has abandoned the shepherd's life for farming, in the company of older relatives, and soon becomes increasingly preoccupied with his private economic and erotic interests. His family elders are likely to warn him not to make friends with other youths outside the family.[4] For a number of adolescent boys to get together outside of festive occasions is, to the traditional Amhara mind, a sign that something wrong is afoot.

The absence of adolescent rites and age groups reflects the individualistic character of Amhara social organization, a subject to which we shall turn in chapter vii. Nevertheless, Amhara society catches young people in its grasp and guides them to adulthood just as firmly and surely as does a society which has many collective arrangements for its adolescents. It does this by means of a well-ordered program for growing up. The road from childhood to adulthood is one series of informal, unproblematic stages through which the growing person adjusts to progressively increased responsibilities and progressively detailed norms. After infancy, there is normally no break in continuity in the whole process.

Toward Adult Work Roles

Following a long and indulged infancy, the Amhara child is early taught the rudiments of work responsibility. At the age of three or four, children are given simple chores, such as shooing chickens from grain drying in the sun or collecting bits of firewood. Somewhat older children are expected to protect the crops against birds, farm animals, and baboons. The Amhara becomes apprenticed in the main vocation of his childhood—tending the herds—almost as soon as he can run about, and six-year-old shepherds play a crucial part in the Amhara economy.

Boys retain the responsibility for tending the herds at least until the age of twelve, but by then they have already been initiated into a number of adult work activities. At about eight or nine years the Amhara boy begins to do his share of the harvesting, sickling the wheat, barley, *têff*, or beans and loading the crops in piles he will help transport to the threshing place. He becomes adept at directing the cattle round and round the threshing floor and at winnowing the grain from the chaff. At times he helps with the weeding.

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Somewhat later, when he reaches ten or eleven, the Amhara boy begins to accustom himself to the plow, perhaps trying his hand at it from time to time while his father rests for lunch. Intermittently his ability increases, and by the age of fourteen or so—earlier if the family is short of help—he is given a regular share of the plowing. This may be limited to one or two hours a day at first, but before many seasons elapse he is ready to undertake a full day's work, along with his older relatives.

In his mid-teens the Amhara boy is normally given a small part of his father's land to use for himself. The boy has full charge of plowing and harvesting this land and selling the crops at market. The crops or money he earns thereby is referred to as *gulammā* ("private possession") and is set aside for helping him to get started on his own later on. Eventually the *gulammā* will be used to purchase new clothes, an ox, and presents for his bride. Year by year the father may add a bit more land for the boy's private management, though all together it does not often amount to a very large quantity; he may produce, say, 150 to 200 liters of grain for his *gulammā* in a year (in the Amhara system of measures, about 2 *dāwlā*). When he has saved enough grain to fill a *riq*, a large wicker storage bin plastered inside with cow dung, he is considered ready to get married and strike out on his own.

By the time a boy begins to accumulate his *gulammā* he has learned nearly everything he needs to know for performing the work which will be expected of him as an adult. In his late teens the e[illegible]tion is completed, through the mastery of such special techniques as fashioning the yoke and wooden attachments for the plow, and constructing the walls and roof for a house.

The work life of the Amhara peasant is thus a simple continuation of activities with which he has long been familiar. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for those who, following their fathers' footsteps, become priests or sorcerers, governors or warriors, artisans or traders. In these cases, moreover, the foregoing pattern applies to a great extent, since the latter roles are often combined with an agricultural economic base and way of life. (Special aspects of some of these variant patterns will be discussed below.)

This pattern of gradually increased work responsibility is conspicuous in the case of girls. While shepherding and other childhood tasks are shared by both sexes, the Amhara girl begins to do distinctively female work at about six or seven. First she learns to clear seeds from cotton, and to spin, by hand. Later on she is introduced to the more taxing female chores, like fetching water and grinding grain. The progressive increase of the girl's work load is visibly illustrated by the graduated sizes of clay jugs used for carrying water. When she begins to fetch water, the young girl carries a tiny jug, called a *gambo*. As she becomes older and stronger she is given a larger size, a small *enserā*. Finally, the mature female carries the large *enserā*, a jug that holds as much as twenty liters.

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At around ten years the Amhara girl leaves the shepherd's work once and for all and spends all her time about the house. She becomes increasingly useful with kitchen work—chopping onions, grinding pepper, baking *injarā*. Bit by bit she learns all the arts of the housewife, including how to make good *doro wat*, a hot chicken stew, the dish that really proves the mettle of an Amhara bride. By the age of twelve or thirteen she knows enough to manage a home by herself and is ripe for marriage, though her training is often capped by a period after marriage during which she works alongside her mother-in-law in the home of her husband's parents. Thus the Amhara social system sees to it that the adolescent girl, as well as the adolescent boy, is familiar with adult work responsibilities and prepared to shoulder them without much ado.

Toward Marital Roles

The transition to adult status in Amhara culture is related above all to the assumption of marital roles. The three events which more than anything else establish one as an adult are marriage, moving into one's own house, and begetting a child.

Preparation for the roles of spouse and parent is more or less continuous throughout childhood, so that nearly all Amhara enter marriage as a matter of course and at an early age. Strong identifications are formed through virtually constant association with the parent of the same sex during adolescence, and to a large extent throughout childhood. When they are not out tending the herds, girls are working around the house in the company of their mothers, and boys are off in the fields or going on trips with their fathers. This identification is strengthened by experimental play within children's groups as well. It has been observed that tiny boys and girls play "marriage" and "house" with considerable sophistication, even to the point of pretending to send a messenger to the bride's parents to announce that she had been proven a virgin.[5]

With regard to premarital preparation for adult sexual functions, however, a double standard does exist. Although public norms require boys to be virgin at marriage, and one hears it said that "in the old days" this norm was strictly enforced, premarital sexual experimentation for boys is regarded as a natural occurrence.* In practice, and according to the norms of the male adolescents themselves, boys are expected to have sexual experience before marriage so long as it is carried out quietly and with discretion. If a boy is still virgin by the end of his teens he may be referred to by one of his

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*Indeed, one of the normal functions of maidservants in the well-to-do families has been to provide sexual initiation for adolescent boys.

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tian rules as breaking the fasts. By adjusting to the adult fasting schedule and submitting to the moral authority of the soul-father the young person's membership in the Amhara religious community is being solidly established. With the advent of full adulthood, around the age of thirty, the Amhara is ready to observe the most severe fast of all, the forty-eight-hour period of total abstinence before Easter.

Forms of obedience and respect comprise the principal fiber of the Amhara social fabric, as we shall see more clearly in chapter vii. They are perhaps the most fundamental lessons of Amhara socialization. As soon as the child is capable of understanding he is made aware that all individuals older than he is, and all those in higher social positions, must be shown the most fastidious deference. Not to do so is a sign of being *bälagē* ("rude"), a trait which is corrected by harsh physical punishment. The readiness to respect superiors appears as early as in children's play groups, where the oldest boy spontaneously dictates the activities of the group and receives unquestioning obedience from the others.

For girls after ten and boys after twelve the training for obedience and respect is stepped up as they come under a more constant regimen of control by their parents and other elders. They are ordered to do a considerable amount of work for the household and are expected to be at the beck and call of any individual of higher status who tells them to do something. Thus they become conditioned to show automatic subservience to any figure of authority in later life, be it the family patriarch, community elder, priest, or political official.

His family of orientation is thus the primary agent for transmitting to the Amhara adolescent the more general societal norms as well as for readying him for his adult roles. In order to secure continuity of the Abyssinian social system from generation to generation, specific mechanisms outside the family, such as puberty rites or adolescent age groups, have not been required to mediate the transition to adulthood.

Personal Identity and Variant Patterns[8]

The most important single determinant of the personality of an Amhara appears to be his identification with the parent or parent-figure of the same sex. "Like father, like son" is both ideology and reality in Abyssinia. The attainment of ego identity is therefore normally a matter of imitation rather than discovery or invention. It represents an unfolding of dispositions that have been long internalized and steadily nursed by the consistent regards of an approving milieu.

Assuming the appropriate psychosexual identity is, it appears, hardly ever problematic. Although members of the same sex typically kiss upon greeting,

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142
291
241
857

FIG. 18.—*Ten-year-old boy plowing*

291
482
415

FIG. 19.—*Mother and daughter carrying water pots*

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permissive rather than prescriptive, and the degree to which individual rights are protected against the demands of collectivities.

In pursuing this analysis we shall examine in turn the three main institutional orders which were structurally differentiated in Amhara society: the kinship system, the church, and the military-political system. In conclusion we shall discuss some more general features of social organization among the Amhara which relate to the question of individual independence.

Kinship

A base line of social constraint among the Amhara is provided by the obligations inherent in their family system. The husband must work to provide food and to defend the boundaries of the family land against all comers. The wife must care for all that transpires within the home compound—preparing of food, fetching water, caring for infants, spinning cotton, tending the fire—and must avoid sexual relationships with other men. The children must tend the flocks, do other work chores, and generally obey the slightest command of any of their elders. Neglect of any of these basic obligations brings sharp reprisals: divorce of the husband, beatings of the wife and children.

Obligations toward the parents persist, moreover, long after the children have married and established families of their own. Young married men are supposed to contribute one or two days a week to working their fathers' land, and to assist them in time of litigation. They are obliged to care for their parents when the latter have become too old to provide for themselves, an obligation sometimes discharged on a rotating basis among the surviving children. There is also a solemn obligation for the children to arrange the appropriate memorial feasts (*tazkär*) following the death of a parent, especially the one that is due on the fortieth day after death.

Adolescent children are subject to the will of their parents with respect to choice of a spouse, and youths are expected to follow their fathers' wishes in connection with adult work roles. Threat of disinheritance is the powerful consideration that underpins these constraints. For their part, the parents are obliged to keep their land in the family. They may not sell it to outsiders, and must bequeath goods and land to their children, dividing them equally among the consanguine children, with perhaps a certain amount extra for the oldest son.

With regard to siblings and more distant kin, however, relations are rather casual and obligations few. Although residence tends to be virilocal among the Amhara, descent is bilateral. Except for a small number of royal and aristocratic families, therefore, there are no obligations with respect to corporate lineages. The absence of formal structure in extended kin relations is

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Amhara society as marked by a moderately high degree of independence. This is to say that Amhara society gives relatively wide rein to individual impulse in action. It is not to say that Amhara culture places a high value on the moral worth of the individual personality. That is a separate question, which we shall now proceed to explore.

INDIVIDUALITY VERSUS CONFORMITY AND ANONYMITY

The extent to which individual personality is valued in a society is reflected primarily in two aspects of its culture. One of these comprises its processes of education, in the broadest sense of the term; the other, its forms of art. The character of these aspects of culture reveal, respectively, the degree of concern for the *development* of an individualized self and the degree of concern for the *expression* of an individualized self.

Education and Socialization

Obedience and politeness are the overriding goals in bringing up children among the Amhara. After a prolonged and indulged infancy, the Amhara child from about three years on is subjected to a regime of discipline and repression. He is taught to fulfill without question any request made by any older person. He is conditioned to stand quietly whenever guests are present and to stand facing the wall while his parents or guests eat their dinner. If addressed by elders, especially those outside his immediate family, he is expected to reply in a barely audible whisper—a norm that is sometimes adhered to with such pathetic faithfulness that it has become the object of gentle satire in a short story by the young Ethiopian writer, Tadesse Liban.[26] Children who are noisy and disrespectful are referred to contemptuously by the term *bälagë*, meaning "rude."

The desires and interests of an Amhara child are not taken into account by those who raise him. He is provided with a bare minimum of clothes, and little effort is expended in procuring him playthings,[27] although in some families little dolls made of rags (*ashängulit*) are produced. Children have a rich play-life with their peers, but this consists mostly in imitating various adult activities. Organized games occur very rarely, the chief one—*gännä*—being played as a rule but once a year, on Christmas Day.[28] The traditional songs and dances are learned from other children while tending the herds, but children are not encouraged to perform them in front of adults. The opinions of children are never expressed, let alone consulted. Indeed, in some commoners' families the children are treated little better than the farm animals, if that well. One occasionally sees a peasant woman or servant directing her child to perform some chore by throwing clods of dirt or manure at him